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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/SE AND PM/DTTC

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SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR THE VISIT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE PETER FLORY TO TURKEY

Classified By: CDA Nancy McEldowney, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (S) SUMMARY: Your visit to Turkey marks the first High Level Defense Group (HLDG) meeting to be held in two years. In the absence of this high level bilateral dialogue, our political military communication with Turkey since 2003 has been dominated by the war in Iraq and its impact on the PKK, Turkey and Turkey's perceived constituents, the Iraqi Turkmen. The 19th HLDG provides an opportunity to elevate the dialogue beyond Iraq, to underscore our positive collaboration in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), including the logistics hub at Incirlik and the Habur Gate GLOC, and to re-focus on our long-term shared strategic goals. It will be important to note U.S. actions to implement commitments made during recent high level USG visits to help Turkey to combat the PKK, but equally important to emphasize opportunities to develop closer cooperation in space technology, missile defense and other areas of the Global War on Terrorism. The HLDG also provides an opportunity to highlight the renewal of our Special Forces collaboration after two years of limited contact. END SUMMARY.

2. (S) We aren't out of the woods yet, but our bilateral political military relationship is on the upswing from the trough that began in 2003 and deepened in fall 2004 with MNF-I operations in Talafar and Fallujah, repeated Turkish truck driver abductions and killings and Turkey's neglect of its relationship with the US while it courted the EU in search of an accession start date. Despite the continued unpopularity of the war in Iraq (over 95% of the population opposed the war), it no longer completely dominates the news. Following the Dec. 17, 2004 EU decision to begin accession talks with Turkey on Oct. 3, and at the initiation of the military, Turkish government rhetoric began to shift to a more positive tone. DCHOD Basbug took the first step in a January 26, 2005 nationally-televised press conference, in which he underscored the importance of the bilateral relationship and NSC SecGen Alpogan, FM Gul and others scrambled to match his words. In an April speech to the Istanbul War Academy, CHOD Ozkok called the bilateral relationship too broad and important to be defined by one issue. With the visits of PM Erdogan, FM Gul and DCHOD Basbug to Washington in early June, the Sept. 8-9 visit of EUCOM Commander Gen Jones and CENTCOM Deputy Commander Lt Gen Smith and the Sept. 24 visit of APNSA Hadley, both sides have demonstrated their commitment to rebuild our historically strong ties. The HLDG provides a platform to deepen this goodwill and, while noting the importance of cooperation on the PKK, to broaden our dialogue and press for specific actions in other areas of interest.

PKK -- GETTING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

3. (S) TGS notified the Embassy that it was prepared to leave PKK off the HLDG agenda since the military believes a separate mechanism to deal with that issue has been established and is working. However, given the high level of attention that this issue has received in Washington, including the Deputies Committee (DC) deliberations, demarches to European capitals asking governments to take action against PKK support networks, and EUCOM and CENTCOM actions to follow through on commitments made during their September visit, we believe that TGS should be reminded of the US effort to combat this problem within our capabilities, and the actions that have been taken toward that end. We should insist that the government does not use this issue to pander to a domestic audience.

4. (S/NF) Both EUCOM and CENTCOM remain engaged on the PKK issue and have taken steps, or committed to do so, to implement the offers made in September. TGS has rejected EUCOM's offer of aerial surveillance along the Turkish side of the border with Iraq but welcomed CENTCOM's offer to continue aerial overflights of the Iraqi side of the border. A program of regular flights is under development. It accepted EUCOM's offer of Information Operations (IO) support. Following an exploratory meeting between EUCOM IO officials and TGS on Oct.6, EUCOM is developing a proposal for interagency consideration to assist GOT development of a comprehensive IO program. TGS also welcomed a "surge capacity" intelligence-sharing program, one stage of which

has been completed. CENTCOM offered to expand the list of PKK HVI on the CENTRIX system and to facilitate TU/IZ mil-mil contacts, which may include joint border patrols. These offers remain under discussion. In addition to laying out these concrete actions, you may wish to emphasize the level of attention this issue is receiving in Washington and share any additional outcomes from the interagency deliberations.

SPECIAL FORCES RE-ENGAGEMENT

15. (S) One of the casualties of the Iraq war was the relationship between our Special Forces (SF). The July 4, 2003 incident in which US forces hooded and handcuffed Turkish SF officers in Suleymaniyah, Iraq has become the stuff of folk lore throughout the Turkish military. The DOD Joint Staff invitation to Turkish Special Forces for a US visit from Sept. 19-27 began to restore that once close relationship, and we fully support a possible SF JCET in March 2006. We understand that TGS has approved the request for this JCET and that a EUCOM survey team may visit Turkey in December to initiate planning. This would be the first JCET in at least three years. You may wish to highlight the importance the US places in renewing this historically good relationship by building on the Sept. visit with a JCET and additional visits.

BEHIND THE SCENES SUPPORT FOR IRAQ

16. (SBU) Despite the unpopularity of the Iraq war, Turkey has provided significant logistical support to both Operation Iraqi Freedom and to OEF in Afghanistan. Turkey has approved multiple requests for the use of Incirlik Air Base, including: a tanker refueling operation which has delivered 28 million gallons since operations began in 2003 and flown over 2,600 sorties; the transit of 8,500 US troops on rotation from Iraq from January through April 2004; and the establishment in May 2005 of a logistics hub which allows 6 US military C-17 aircraft to move the amount of cargo it took 9-10 military aircraft to move from Germany. This hub has facilitated the movement of 41,339 tons of supplies since its inception; flown 1280 C-17 sorties; received 577 wide-bodies cargo aircraft; and houses 150 TDY support personnel. Turkey also approved the use of hub flights for the emergency evacuation of US soldiers from Iraq.

17. (SBU) The Habur Gate crossing from Turkey into Iraq has facilitated 25% of fuel shipments to Coalition forces in Iraq -- approximately 340,000 gallons of fuel every day. It also handles two-thirds of gasoline and diesel fuel shipments for the Iraqi people in the form of three million gallons a day in humanitarian fuel shipments. Significant shipments of food and water for coalition forces also pass through the border.

18. (SBU) The Turkish government has also demonstrated its support through its public announcements of support for the January elections, the October Constitutional Referendum and the upcoming December elections; provision of training in Turkey for Iraqi diplomats and (as part of the NATO training mission) for the Iraqi security forces; hosting a seminar for Iraqi constitution drafters; hosting a meeting of rival Talafar tribal leaders in August for a reconciliation dialogue; and delivery of aid to Talafar following the recent Coalition operation there.

PARTNER IN GWOT

19. (S) Beyond its support for Iraq, Turkey has provided valuable assistance and cooperation to GWOT. On Aug. 8, Turkey completed its second International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) command (II and VII) in Afghanistan, which it held for six months and during which time it contributed over 1,600 troops. Turkey and France have agreed on a shared command of the ISAF Multinational Brigade in Kabul during the second half of 2006 and Turkey has also indicated its willingness to consider heading or supporting a Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the future. Turkey also contributes to reconstruction and training efforts in Afghanistan. It is involved in the reconstruction of schools and is exploring counter-narcotics training programs for Afghan police and alternative livelihood options for poppy farmers. Following PM Erdogan's May visit to Afghanistan, he pledged an additional \$100M in assistance to the country.

10. (U) Together with the US, Turkey coordinates military assistance to Georgia and Azerbaijan, improving their abilities to protect key energy transport routes. Turkey subscribes to every security arrangement it is eligible to join, including the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). It will host the first PSI combined air, land and sea exercise in May 2006.

IRAN AND SYRIA - DIFFERENT MEANS TO THE SAME END

11. (S) Turkey's watchword for both Syria and Iran is "engagement." While the government shares our goal of a nuclear-free Iran, it doesn't want to jeopardize its nascent trade development opportunities, including energy, or its renewed intelligence exchange with Iran on the PKK. According to TGS, Turkey and Iran began sharing intelligence this summer on the PKK, holding regular meetings at the border. As of September, Iran had turned over 40 suspected PKK members or sympathizers. Turkey touts its support for the EU-3 dialogue and Turkish officials stress to us the need to maintain dialogue and to identify a diplomatic solution. The tepid and equivocal response by PM Erdogan and the MFA to President Ahmadinejad's Oct. 25 statement about Israel demonstrate that Turkey is trying to walk both sides of the line on Iran. Turkey's tact toward Syria is the same. Turkish military officials have characterized Syria as a "scared cat" that could lash out if "backed into a corner." While Turkey supports the UNIC, the Turkish foreign policy establishment fears instability if there is a regime change in Damascus. They and others in the government stress the need to support Assad against those in the regime who seek to undermine him and regularly urge US engagement.

DEFENSE INDUSTRY COOPERATION WEAK

12. (SBU) Historically the strongest area of our bilateral relationship, the bilateral security cooperation relationship, is significantly declining. Under Turkey's current policy, being implemented by the Undersecretariat for Defense Industries (SSM), the emphasis is on Direct Commercial Sales at the expense of Foreign Military Sales and American companies are having difficulty competing. The last significant commercial tender won by a U.S. firm was the 2002 win by Boeing for an Air Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) system. (Note: Boeing recently threatened to take SSM to arbitration over protracted contract disputes and just signed the Critical Design Review this month.) In early 2004, SSM canceled three tenders (UAVs, Main Battle Tanks and ATAK Helicopter). A second UAV tender was won by the Israelis weeks before PM Erdogan's spring 2005 visit to Israel.

13. (SBU) The revised ATAK Helicopter tender (Note: The first tender was issued in 1995 and won by Bell Textron. SSM canceled it over technology transfer issues. End Note.) issued in February 2005 was the first to contain new "standard" terms and condition. The three US firms that took the tender (Bell, Boeing, Sikorsky) found the new T&Cs so onerous that Bell immediately dropped out of contention and Sikorsky soon followed. Boeing invested considerable time and energy to try and work through its concerns with SSM but, even after several contract revisions and two postponements of the bid due date, was unable to justify participation. On Oct. 13, Boeing notified SSM that it will not submit a bid on Nov. 8. (Note: SSM Undersecretary Murad Bayar is invited to the Charge's Nov. 8 dinner in honor of your visit. End Note.)

14. (SBU) SSM's stated goal is to develop an indigenous defense industry that can supply components, such as a mission computer system, for integration into foreign products, beginning with the ATAK Helicopter, and has outlined an aggressive timetable to do so. To meet that schedule, SSM requires companies to sign up unconditionally to all T&Cs and to confirm at the time of bid submission the host government's willingness to allow transfer of the required technology. ASD Suzanne Patrick and State DAS Greg Suchan explained to Bayar in clear terms the USG limitations that prohibit such up front guarantees. SSM has offered to exchange side letters with US firms that would clarify SSM acceptance of a USG "advisory opinion" but refused to revise the tender language to clarify that requirement. Sikorsky, which is considering participating in a tender for 52 utility helicopters and, if it wins, establishing in Turkey a global production site for its "World Hawk" helicopter, will not bid if this condition is not clarified in the tender. ODC Chief MG Sutton has held extensive talks with Service Chiefs, DCHOD Kosaner and J-5 head LTG Zorlu about the negative impact of the SSM program on US participation in the Turkish defense market. Across the board, they pledged their preference for US equipment but professed an inability -- or unwillingness -- to influence the process.

SPACE AND MISSILE DEFENSE - NEGLECTED AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

15. (S) Turkey is interested in finding a partner for the initial purchase and eventual co-development of a remote satellite sensing system. In August 2004, the Turkish Air Force submitted a questionnaire to six countries (US, Germany, France, Israel, UK and S. Korea) to gauge each government's willingness to share the required technology with Turkey for such co-production. Subsequently this project was passed to SSM as a procurement project. SSM issued an RFI to which over 41 institutions and companies,

including Lockheed Martin, responded. It expects to issue in Jan. 2006 a tender for the purchase of an initial satellite system.

16. (S) At the same time, the US has been working with Turkey towards signature of an umbrella space agreement under which working groups could be established to explore joint project opportunities. The Turks have been reluctant to establish a working group absent a signed agreement. Your signature of this agreement will remove that excuse and we will press Turkey to engage with us.

17. (S) Our missile defense cooperation with Turkey is limited. Despite TGS' acknowledged concerns with Iran's nuclear program, it does not view Iran as a near-term threat.

The USG would like to evaluate Turkey as a potential location for a forward based radar site in Europe but it took a year of discussions to gain GOT agreement, in July 2004, to conduct a missile placement study. The study will not only provide additional input into the sensor placement evaluation process, but will hopefully engage Turkey in the process. To gain agreement on this study we had to amend the bilateral Ballistic Missile Defense MOU. After eight months of negotiation, on Oct. 22, TGS confirmed its agreement to the amended MOU text. However, the agreement calls for the use of FY 05 funding. With the start of the new fiscal year, we lost those funds and will have to identify a new source of funding.

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